

The following Emergency Message is being transmitted to alert U.S. citizens in The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos.

As of August 24<sup>th</sup>, a tropical wave over the Lesser Antilles and Puerto Rico is currently bringing heavy winds and significant rain to those areas. This system could become a tropical storm or tropical depression at any time during the next couple of days. Environmental conditions could become more conducive for development by the weekend when the system is near the central or northwestern Bahamas. Per the National Hurricane Center, "Because of the large uncertainties regarding this system's development and future track, it is too early to speculate on what specific impacts might occur in the northwestern Bahamas, Florida or beyond."

Strong winds, heavy rains, storm surge, and possible flash floods are expected to occur over portions Turks and Caicos and the southeastern Bahamas (Long Island, Ragged Island, Acklins, Crooked Island, Mayaguana and Inagua) as early as Thursday morning, and could result in severe flooding. The Central and Northwest Bahamas should be prepared for heavy rains and strong, gusty winds beginning Friday. U.S. citizens residing and traveling in coastal areas in this region should be alert to flooding and storm surge.

Tropical storms can escalate very quickly, limiting the time available for a safe evacuation. Travelers should apprise family and friends in the United States of their whereabouts, and keep in close contact with their tour operator, hotel staff, and local officials for evacuation instructions in the event of a weather emergency. Travelers should also protect their travel and identity documents against loss or damage, as the need to replace lost documentation could hamper or delay return to the United States.

The U.S. Embassy advises all U.S. citizens living in and/or visiting this region take certain basic precautions in preparation for a possible storm.

#### Supplies and Preparation:

- If you are living in this region: Ensure you have adequate supplies of food, water, medications, and other essential supplies on hand. It is not unusual for stores and shops to close before, during, and after a hurricane. Check your generators and make sure you have an adequate supply of fuel; cut down any dead foliage and remove any debris around your home; secure any items that could become dangerous flying objects (patio furniture, umbrellas, barbecues, etc.); have the tools and supplies on hand to secure your house (plywood, nails, shutters, etc.). Upper floors in high-rise buildings are at increased risk of windows being blown out, due to the fact that wind speed increases with height.
- If you are a tourist: talk to your hotel front desk to learn about the hotel's emergency plan for a hurricane. Notify your family and friends of your whereabouts and your plans until the storm passes. Be sure to have an adequate supply of necessary prescriptions and medications on hand.

#### During a Storm:

- Do not go outside, flying debris is lethal;

- Do not watch the storm from beaches as storm surge, riptides, and rogue waves are hazardous;
- Stay inside in an interior room of your residence (bathroom, large closet, or pantry). Choose a room with little or no windows that is located away from the exterior wall of the residence;
- Stay off your home/cell phone and radio. Keep all means of communication available for an emergency;
- If a member of your family sustains an injury during the storm, report the injury and degree of severity to the local authorities as soon as possible.

U.S. citizens in the Turks and Caicos and The Bahamas should monitor local radio, the National Weather Service and local media to stay aware of any weather developments in their area. The U.S. Embassy will update this emergency message if new information becomes available. American citizens should stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of their surroundings at all times. Small craft operators in the Turks and Caicos and The Bahamas are recommended to remain in port.

U.S. citizens should also stay current with media coverage of local events, weather and marine forecasts, and monitor the [National Hurricane Center](#) and local media to stay aware of any weather developments in their area. For official information from the Bahamian and TCI governments regarding weather conditions, please monitor ZNS or other local media outlets.

Additional information on hurricanes and storm preparedness may be found on our "[Hurricane Season-Know Before You Go](#)" webpage, and on the "[Natural Disasters](#)" page of the Bureau of Consular Affairs [website](#). Updated information on travel in The Bahamas may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States and Canada, or from overseas, 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Please continue to monitor the [Embassy's website](#) for updated information.

For any emergencies involving U.S. citizens, please call local first responders, which is 919 or 911 in The Bahamas and 911 in Turks & Caicos. Then contact the U.S. Citizens Services Unit of the U.S. Embassy's Consular Section, located at 42 Queen Street (across from the British Colonial Hilton Hotel), Nassau; telephone: 242-322-1181; after hours emergency telephone: 242-357-7004; ACS unit fax: 242-356-7174; e-mail: [ACSNASSAU@state.gov](mailto:ACSNASSAU@state.gov); web page: <http://nassau.usembassy.gov>. The Turks & Caicos Consular Agency is located at 2 Venture Ct., Grace Bay Suite 102E, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos. The Consular Agent can be reached at 649-232-5713 or by email at [TullThomasLS@state.gov](mailto:TullThomasLS@state.gov).